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The Yale Political Monthly

An Undergraduate Publication

The Two Billion Dollar Ditch

Congressional Deficit Fixation Buries the Supercollider

The Ignoble Lie

When Cultural Sensitivity Goes Too Far

Escape From New York

Staten Island Secession Sets a Dangerous Precedent for New Haven

Observations

The American Role in Northern Ireland

Letters

A Debate on Dwight Hall's Place in the Community

Celebrating Fifteen Years of Publication

VOLUME 15, NUMBER 2 ❧ FEBRUARY 1994

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We are the Yale Political Monthly. We were founded in 1979 by Robert Kagan and Joseph Rose for the purpose of promoting informed debate and reasoned discussion. We espouse no one set of beliefs, but rather print articles which represent a wide range of political opinion. The views expressed in the YPM are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the staff of the magazine or of Yale University.

We encourage responses and will print all thoughtful and well-written letters with appropriate authorial response in the hope of stimulating continued dialogue on campus. All written material should be submitted to the Editor or mailed to the YPM. Students wishing to join the staff of the YPM should contact the Editor at 436-1043.

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4 Letters

A debate regarding Dwight Hall's place in the community.

5 Observations:

The American Role in Northern Ireland

President Clinton rightly granted Gerry Adams, leader of the IRA's political arm, Sinn Fein, a US visa and entrance to the country. In doing so, America is supporting the peace process in Northern Ireland.

6 The Two Billion Dollar Ditch

Gautam Dutta

The Superconducting Supercollider has fallen victim to a public that only cares about trendy science and a Congress which wants nothing more than job creation programs and deficit reduction. This event bodes ill for the future of purely scientific research in America.

11 The Ignoble Lie

Kimberly Kagan

In its efforts to attract minorities to science, the American Association for the Advancement of Science has made the dangerous assertion that people of different races think in different ways. It is better to build a society on the basis of the noble lie that "all men are created equal" than upon the ignoble lie that they are not.

17 Escape from New York

Chris Wang

Secession proponents in Staten Island and New Haven believe that their respective local governments are meeting the needs of the majority at an unfair cost to their communities. At first glance, secession seems to make good economic sense, but in reality, this option will result in an enormous rise in taxes, or a cut in services, or both.

Observations

According to us National Security Advisor C. Anthony Lake, American foreign policy since the end of the Cold War has relied on creative and stealthy diplomacy. The us brought Israel and the PLO to the negotiating table; and it must do the same for other such conflicts, including those in Bosnia, Cyprus and Northern Ireland. The question is: can the United States accomplish these diverse aims? Gerry Adams, the leader of the political arm of the Irish Republican Army, Sinn Fein, seems to think that the us can achieve these objectives in Northern Ireland.

The Clinton Administration recently permitted Adams to enter the country for a two day visit to New York. The Administration did not win any friends in the British government with this allowance. Newspapers recognize that Irish-American lobbyists, including Senators Kennedy and Moynihan, pressured President Clinton to welcome Adams into the us.

As the London-based *Guardian* points out, Rep. Moynihan, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, possesses a key vote for Clinton's domestic agenda. Either the Irish lobby dictated the President's decision to grant Adams a visa after eight previous denials in the past five administrations, or President Clinton envisions real hope for peace in Northern Ireland. Perhaps the President genuinely believes that Sinn Fein is ready to talk peace, and that the United States can facilitate better conditions for negotiations through the acknowledgment of the leader of Sinn Fein.

It is not clear what impact this decision will have. If Dublin, London, and Belfast are serious about finding a settlement, they will strike a deal with or without Sinn Fein. According to the *Economist*, in the 1992 Irish elections, Sinn Fein garnered only one third of the Catholic vote in Northern Ireland and merely 2% of the Irish Republic vote, meaning that Adams represents only 108,000 voters. In addition, if any one of the three parties is not serious about a resolution, the United States will certainly not be able to influence England coercively; this issue is most serious with respect to Britain, which stands the most to lose if any type of agreement is negotiated. Unlike Israel, Britain needs neither the money nor the might of the us.

On the other hand, Britain would like to see Sinn Fein and the IRA tamed once and for all. While Adams has stated that he wants to take the "gun totally out of Irish politics," he worries that without an incentive, the British government will "squander the opportunity for peace." After all, Britain has come closer to the negotiating table in the 25 years since the IRA's inception than in the hundreds of years since the conflict began. The time is ripe for compromise between Britain, the diverse political parties in Northern Ireland and Ireland itself.

The current conflict in Northern Ireland between the Protestant British-backed majority and the poorer Irish Catholic minority has been characterized by retaliation,

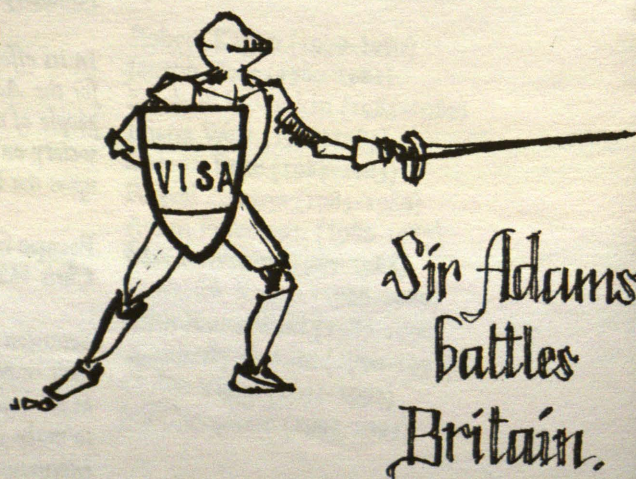
civilian killings, anti-Catholic discrimination and perpetual fear. A negotiated settlement will not be a "long-lasting peace" without the support of Sinn Fein. The United States has made this political party's presence inevitable; a conclusion that the British government already obviated in its own secret talks with Sinn Fein. The Northern Irish, Catholics included, have had enough of the violence.

If Northern Ireland is to maintain economic links to Britain while joining the Republic of Ireland, provisions must be made to prevent discrimination against the Irish Protestants who would be the minority. The end result will be that lower-class Catholics in Northern Ireland will benefit from being less the victims of discrimination and more part of a homeland. Middle- and upper-class Catholics will hope for economic growth in a newly unified Ireland with continued trade with Britain. The Irish Protestants will rely upon British influence to uphold an "equal opportunity" legal foundation. Finally, Britain will cease to wage a retaliatory war at the expense of civilian lives, military expenditures, and strained foreign relations.

As with the Israel-PLO settlement, post-Cold War American foreign policy must work behind the scenes in this case to ensure that all players relinquish some of their claims for the common good. Adams, the representative of Sinn Fein, came to the us with a message of eventually eradicating Northern Irish violence through a fresh round of diplomatic discussions. Through granting Adams a visa, the Clinton Administration has implicitly legitimized his political party. Adams should take this recognition back to his homeland, and use this support as a bargaining chip in talks with Britain. The consequence of this new American policy, though quiet and informal, creates an impetus for a negotiated resolution to the conflict in Northern Ireland.

—Bettina Polydor BK '96

The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not in any way represent the opinions of *The Yale Political Monthly* or of Yale University.



Letters

DEAR SIR — A victim of your pre-publication advertising, I eagerly awaited the December issue of the *Yale Political Monthly*. I was hoping to learn, as posters around campus had promised, whether Dwight Hall is “set up to benefit the New Haven community or the Yale students” [“Community Service or Disservice?” December 1993]. Instead I read an analysis of Dwight Hall which neglected to quote a single individual working or volunteering there, and provided more information about a foundation in Bridgeport than any institution in New Haven. I have yet to resolve whether Ms. Kahn’s article, or your entire magazine, has the more inappropriate title.

Ms. Kahn reached several valid conclusions; she unfortunately extrapolated from those conclusions an indictment of Dwight Hall without any understanding of its history or mission. I agree with her statement that “[t]he overall impact of Yale volunteers is more limited than that of true community-based centers.” Yet this concession is far from an indictment of Dwight Hall’s philosophy or programs, especially considering that Ms. Kahn admits from the outset that this difference is “inevitabl[e].”

Dwight Hall has long been aware of its limitations as a student community service center. Its existence does not suggest that Yale students make a more valuable contribution to New Haven than city residents themselves, or that volunteers are preferable substitutes to a child’s natural parents. In fact, since December 1992, any Yale group must receive sponsorship from an established community-run agency as a precondition in order to receive Dwight Hall support. Consequently, Ms. Kahn’s assertion that the “vast majority” of Yale volunteers work “through Yale-organized programs, not community based ones” creates a somewhat misleading dichotomy.

Dwight Hall, furthermore, is distinct from virtually every other college volunteer organization in its relationship to the surrounding community. Because it is an institution entirely independent from the Yale administration, Dwight Hall can encourage greater community participation in the provision of human services. The New Haven Halfway House, the Columbus House Homeless Shelter, and now LEAP are examples of established institutions in the city which were first conceived in Dwight Hall.

It is central to Dwight Hall’s mission, Ms. Kahn’s claims notwithstanding, that student initiatives become viable community agencies. Dwight Hall has long provided the seed money, fiscal sponsorship, and professional guidance for New Haven endeavors, in recognition of the validity of Ms. Kahn’s contention that “[l]ocal revitalization must come primarily from within the community itself.”

Dwight Hall has never claimed to be anything more than a student community service agency. If Ms. Kahn’s article had merely aspired to prove that Yale volunteers must avoid *noblesse oblige* conceptions of their own self importance, I would wholeheartedly endorse her views. Instead, both her cover story and the *YPM*’s publicity purported to pass judgment on an institution about which the author made no attempt to learn. It is the *Yale Political Monthly* which has performed the “disservice,” by misrepresenting Dwight Hall and the hundreds of students who volunteer through it weekly.

— Christopher Sclafani PC’94
Former Dwight Hall Cabinet Coordinator

THE AUTHORS RESPOND—First, we wish to note that the article merely asked the question, “Is Dwight Hall set up to benefit the New Haven community or the Yale students?” The article in no way intended to reply to this question. We do not believe that this issue has been addressed on campus yet. We leave it on the table for discussion.

Second, it was not the purpose of the article to evaluate the services provided by Dwight Hall organizations, nor did we claim that it was. Although such an evaluation would be interesting, it was well beyond the scope of the article to undertake that task. Consequently, we did relatively little research about Dwight Hall.

The article intended, rather, to highlight the achievements of the Charles D. Smith, Jr. Foundation’s Education Center, located in Bridgeport as you mentioned, in improving the academic life of its students. It is apparent that the Charles Smith Education Center has lured many students by virtue of its superstar patron, but we wanted to explore why the Education Center has kept them returning every day, and has attracted so many parents to bring their children there for help with poor grades or behavioral problems. We believe that the students return and parents arrive for two reasons: because of the understanding of the Center’s directors and its stature in the community. We emphasize once again that the executive director long resided in Bridgeport, that she has informal contact with local school teachers, some of whom tutor at the Center, and she consequently has a wonderful rapport with parents and students. Many parents volunteer at the Center; many of the support staff are Bridgeport teens, veterans of the program. In short, the Charles D. Smith Education Center has won the hearts of the neighborhood’s parents, teachers, and students.

In investigating what made one tutoring center so successful, namely, its strong base within its community, we noted that Dwight Hall did not possess this same quality in this same way. We are sorry that this criticism has been interpreted as an indictment of all of Dwight Hall’s activities. Nevertheless, as Mr. Sclafani concedes, the effectiveness of Dwight Hall, by virtue of the Yale students volunteering through it, is necessarily limited by their short stay in New Haven. In addition, although Dwight Hall has developed greater ties with the community than any other similar college organization, it does not have the capacity to be as integrated into the New Haven community as does a neighborhood center such as Charles Smith’s.

We hoped that this article would bring to Yale’s attention a model program, which may be viable within the New Haven community, and is therefore relevant both to New Haven and Yale. We are sorry that Mr. Sclafani could not see this relationship. We also hoped to raise the question: is Dwight Hall maximizing its effectiveness in the community? We ask, would Dwight Hall have greater success if, rather than beginning programs that become institutions within New Haven, it supported those many programs which residents themselves have developed and which already have taken root in the community? In what ways could it best do this? One suggestion, that we now put on the table to continue the debate, is that Yale students may volunteer their time better not with individual New Haven students through specific Yale volunteer groups, but with community organizations which serve the former and sponsor the latter.

Editor’s note—The Editor is solely responsible for all pre-publication advertising, and therefore takes responsibility for the posters which asked, as did the article, “Is Dwight Hall set up to benefit the New Haven community or the Yale students?” I believe that this is a valid and unanswered question, and would like to continue the debate on it within the magazine’s pages. Anyone who wishes to participate in this debate should contact a member of the editorial staff.

The Two Billion Dollar Ditch

Gautam Dutta

*This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper.*
— Hollow Men

The world did not end, but the supercollider did. Yet T.S. Eliot could not have composed more fitting an epitaph. Last October, Congress voted to smash not particles, but the Superconducting Supercollider (ssc) instead — despite having already spent \$2 billion on the project. Ironically, cancelling the ssc will neither reduce the deficit nor promote productive spending. Beyond the wasted billions, the ssc's demise brings the United States government's commitment to science into question. As Congress cuts overall government spending in response to the deficit, it seems that funding for basic science research has become politically expendable.

The supercollider was proposed in 1983 in order to answer one of the most fundamental questions in nature, regarding the origin of mass. Conventional theory holds that at the moment of the Big Bang, all matter shared an identical, dense quality known as Gauge symmetry. A trillionth of a second after the Big Bang, however, the theory assumes that matter diverged into two forms.¹ Particles gained mass, while electromagnetic radiation did not; this factor separates what is human from the substance of a mere photon. To solve this ontological riddle, physicists at the Department of Energy requested funding for the supercollider so that they could recreate the matter which emerged in the instant after the Big Bang. In the process, these scientists hoped finally to reconcile special relativity with quantum mechanics.

In order to form this dense primordial matter, the scientists postulated that they had to create collisions between subatomic particles (quarks) at nearly the speed of light. Thus, the proposed project required not only a 54-mile, circular accelerator tunnel, but also superconduct-

ing magnets and detection apparatus. The price tag for such an immense project initially came to over \$4.4 billion; Yale Physics Professor D. Allan Bromley, President Bush's science advisor, attributes most of the expense to the third item.² With a minute radius of 10^{-13} cm, quarks would only appear to the most powerful — and costly — microscopes in the world.

Bromley initially opposed the project as a member of the National Science Foundation (NSF). He correctly predicted that the project would "cost too much" to be politically viable in the long run, because the Berkeley group who designed the ssc used overly optimistic cost projections. Reagan, however, warmed to the project upon hearing a physicist's impassioned plea: "Mr. President, more than one third of the total gross domestic product of the United States can be traced to the study of the atom and its constituents." When Bromley later inquired into the source of the physicist's data, Dr. Triplepiece replied, "Who knows? It worked!"³ President Reagan formally endorsed the ssc on 30 March 1988.

This incident demonstrates the dilemma researchers face when attempting to obtain government funding. U.S. Representative Martin Frost (D-TX) holds that science is not an "easy sell" to politicians, because pure scientific research focuses on gaining knowledge, not producing jobs.⁴ Across the partisan aisle, Senator Phil Gramm (R-TX) agrees, "Too often the government invests in programs that have big returns in the next elections when they ought to invest for the next generation."⁵ Bromley additionally asserts that investment in science and technology has "dramatic[ally]" improved the American quality of life. Over the past four decades the average lifespan has increased by 25 years as new vaccines and drugs have eradicated deadly diseases. Unfortunately, such benefits only arrive later. Researchers, in the meantime, must "sell" science to a wary public.

In the past scientists successfully received federal funding on grounds of national security. During World War II the government started underwriting research, which produced such

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THE TWO BILLION DOLLAR DITCH

advances as radar and the atomic bomb. As a result, the American public viewed science not as a luxury, but as a crucial weapon against communism during the Cold War. The 1957 Soviet launching of *Sputnik*, for example, spurred the United States to invest in NASA. A dozen years later, American astronaut Armstrong walked on the moon. At approximately \$76 billion, science represents one percent of the federal outlays for the 1993 fiscal year. It is telling, however, that the Defense Department received over 54% of these monies to develop weapons systems.⁶ Only one tenth of the research and development (R&D) budget actually supports research. For Bromley, successes in the "d" have only "masked disasters" in the "r." Pure science has yet to reap its fair share of the peace dividend.

To foster innovation, the government supports science under the aegis of peer review. In each agency or department, a panel of prominent scientists recommends the most promising projects for which funding should be requested from the President's proposed budget. Peer review, according to Bromley, has become the "envy of the world" because independent scientists, not the government, set America's research agenda. Yet one formidable force limits the authority of this decentralized structure — the purse strings of the Congress.

Why, then, did Congress choose the supercollider as its "project of choice" in 1989 after the United States was deprived of the perceived Soviet threat? The answer lies in the convergence of two political factors. First, consecutive GOP Presidents and key members of Congress strongly endorsed the project. In addition, the powerful Texas delegation — then led by Bush, Speaker Jim Wright, and Senators Bentsen and Gramm — shepherded the state's hard-won prize through Congress. Furthermore, most research was linked to defense, and, thus, Republicans generally approved science funding. Aside from the SSC's merits, Rep.

Frost offers a partisan motive for the support: the GOP "did not care about the deficit." Under the aegis of promoting science, who could resist the chance to revive an ailing economy?

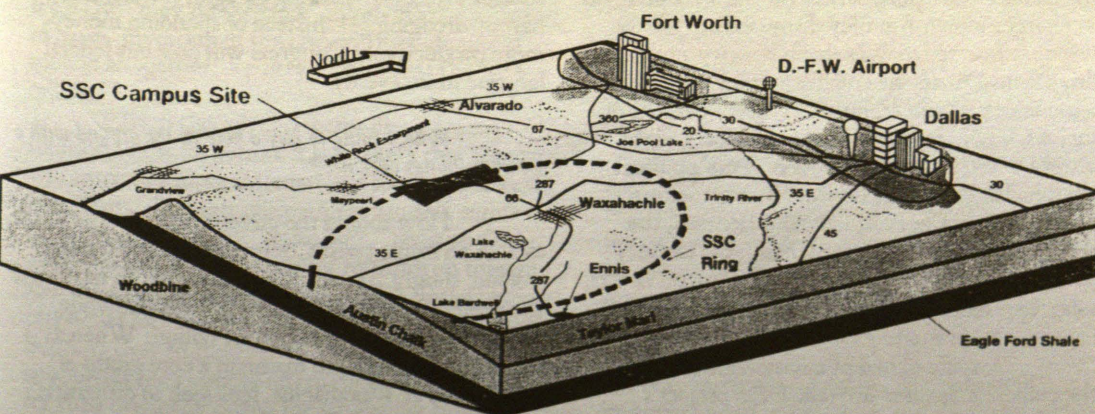
Many politicians, moreover, believed that the SSC would, in Reagan's words, help America "maintain [its] leading edge in science and technology."⁷ As Congress deliberated, the European Community embarked upon its own scaled-down particle accelerator in Geneva. Amidst sentiment that America had begun to decline, lawmakers approved the SSC in order to stay ahead of Western European research. Yet this same competitive preoccupation led to the SSC's downfall, for it discouraged countries from making a financial commitment to the project.

The collider, then, gained approval upon two conditions. First, the project could not siphon funds from existing federal science research. This proviso sought to prevent the SSC from displacing, or "crowding out", smaller projects. Second, non-federal sources had to contribute a third, or about \$2.7 billion, of the total project cost, which soon rose from \$4.4 billion to \$8.2 billion. To this end, the State of Texas agreed to provide up to \$1 billion, leaving foreign countries to provide the remaining \$1.7 billion.

A rising chorus of critics charged that the project did not fulfill either proviso. First, the SSC failed to secure substantial non-federal funding. By January 1993, the SSC had only garnered \$400 million of the \$1.7 billion in required foreign contributions — adding another billion to the federal burden.⁸ According to Bromley, President Bush privately secured a \$1.5 billion commitment from Japan. The hapless Bush, however, did not make good on Premier Kaifu's offer. Desperate for re-election, he abandoned the SSC's cause. In order to reduce America's trade deficit, Bush decided to pitch American auto parts to Tokyo instead:

Science is not an "easy sell" to politicians because pure scientific research focuses on gaining knowledge, not producing jobs

The schematic location of SSC facilities (Courtesy of URA)



Japan's money never materialized.

Many scientists, furthermore, held that Big Science projects like the SSC deprived more relevant research of needed funds. These charges further tainted the scientific legitimacy of the collider. SSC spending, which in 1993 amounted to \$640 million, constituted only a small portion of a massive water-energy appropriations bill; this funding was not related to any other science outlays. Yet the public and these scientists perceive total science spending as a zero-sum game: one project gains at another's expense. This scenario, however, does not generally hold true once a program has become part of the budget. Under "capped category" spending, cutting the SSC actually did reduce — not re-allocate — total government outlays on science. To this point, Bromley remarked, "Sensible people shoot out[ward]. Scientists shoot in[ward];" in other words, these critics within the scientific community have done nothing more than harm the funding for fellow researchers' projects, with no benefit to their own.

Understanding of the basic nature of the universe could probably be put off a few years until we get our economic house in order.⁹

In hindsight, Bush's defeat marked the death knell of the SSC, for it inaugurated a deficit-wary era in which science has become increasingly "vulnerable" to budget cuts.¹⁰ The 113 House freshmen regarded big science outlays as a luxury which would be better spent elsewhere, especially on social programs. According to Rep. Frost, Congress felt it could only justify one of two large science projects: the SSC or the \$14 billion space station. This was a battle the SSC was destined to lose. In order to survive, a big science program must capture political support on either its scientific merits or employment potential. While the public could identify with exploring space, no one understood the social benefit of colliding particles. On this count alone the SSC was doomed.

Many critics, furthermore, asserted that the collider was "pork barrel" for the state of Texas — charges which Bromley dismissed as "totally wrong." Located in Waxahachie, a city a half-hour drive from Dallas, the collider employed about 2,500 scientists and technicians. Sixty percent of SSC jobs, however, were laced across forty-eight states.¹¹ Yet, by 1993, however, Texas' political clout had declined. Texas lost its two greatest patrons, Bush, the President, and Bentsen, the Senate Finance Committee Chairman. Deputy Whips Martin Frost (D-TX) and Joe Barton (R-TX), who represented the SSC's Ellis County site, thus faced an uphill battle.

A spate of bad publicity contributed to the collider's demise. To reduce the project's

annual cost, the Clinton Administration delayed its completion until 2002 — further raising costs. By 1993, its price tag had mushroomed from \$8.2 billion to \$11.2 billion as a result of schedule and design changes. Did this delay seal the SSC's fate? Joe Barton's press secretary, Craig Murphy, believes that this move was the "single worst thing" Clinton could have done politically, because this action fulfilled predictions that the SSC would lag behind schedule and go over budget.¹² In contrast, Rep. Frost characterizes the project's proposed extension as "helpful," for this measure allowed Congress to spread out the cost in smaller installments.

The General Accounting Office, meanwhile, accused the project of excessive spending and cost overruns. Rep. Frost, crying foul, held that the GAO improperly based the latter upon "initial, fragmentary" projections of short-term cost increases.¹³ To resolve this bickering, the Department of Energy relieved Universities Research Association (URA) — the 80-university consortium directing the SSC — of construction and financial duties in August 1993.

Finally, Clinton offered the SSC lukewarm support at best. According to Frost, the Administration was unwilling to "expend political capital" on the SSC during the same time period that proposed changes were announced in tax and health care reform. Only Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary — not Clinton or Gore — visited the Waxahachie site to show her support. Three times over a sixteen-month span, the House voted down the collider; twice the Senate revived it in conference committee. On 19 October 1993, the House finally prevailed.

So the Super Collider [sic] is dead, the taxpayers have been saved \$10 billion. And I think that's good news for the American people.¹⁴

What will the public gain from losing the SSC? Congress applies "saved funds" to other program budgets, not to deficit reduction. Unless Congress lowers the appropriate spending cap, erstwhile SSC funds will not reduce the deficit. More likely than not, the money will disperse across many smaller projects: "parking garages, sewers, and harbor-dredging."¹⁵ Instead of spending money more productively, Congress will dole out federal largesse more evenly.

Who's going to buy a hole in the ground with a lot of buildings over it?¹⁶

How should the government dispose of the SSC? In an ironic twist Congress appropriated \$640 million, sought last year to fund the SSC, to terminate the project instead; collider backers, meanwhile, forecast such costs to exceed \$1 billion. Whereas former patrons seek to maintain a core group of researchers at Waxahachie, foes seek to dismantle

If the US cannot maintain funding for its own projects, it cannot be expected to act as a reliable partner in international scientific endeavours

THE TWO BILLION DOLLAR DITCH

the SSC altogether. Such squabbling, however, obscures the most fundamental issue at hand: if the U.S. cannot maintain funding for its own projects, it cannot be expected to act as a reliable partner in international scientific endeavours.

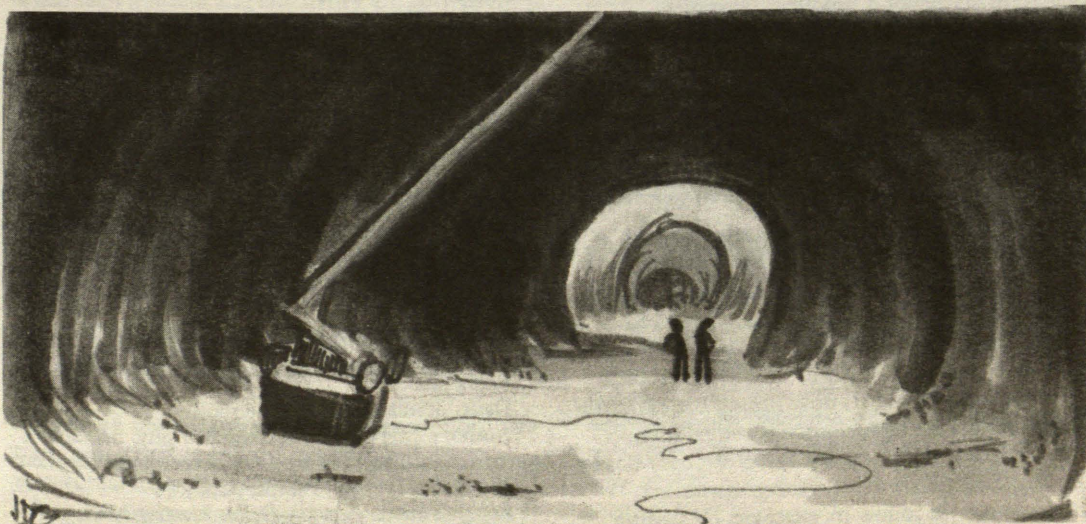
The supercollider caper has further undermined America's tenuous credibility as a research collaborator. "If [he] were a foreign leader," Rep. Frost says that he would not even trust the US. Although Japan held back, Russia and India made significant, in-kind contributions to the SSC, all for naught. The SSC now demonstrates the same kind of spotty American commitment shown to the space station; to date, three consecutive Presidents have altered project blueprints. As Bromley noted, these changes render obsolete the costly equipment of collaborating countries: Yankee caprice flattered neither Japan, Canada, or Sweden.

LHC. Basically, voters cannot gain many jobs from a project abroad.

In order to regain international credibility, Congress must fund science and technology in a more coherent fashion. Many scientists suggest that monies must be appropriated over several years in order to insulate programs from the vagaries of politics. Bromley rejects this parliamentary model. In his view the public should have a say every year. At any rate, Congress will hardly agree to curb its fiscal authority.

Perhaps Congress can best simplify the science budget by eliminating the practice of "earmarking" — science's pork barrel program. Last year, Congress approved \$2 billion for research which bypassed scientific scrutiny — including funding for the Stanford Linear Accelerator (SLAC).¹⁹ Consequently, high-energy physics now

9



An enhanced view of the actual SSC tunnel (SSC laboratory archive photograph from June/July 1993)

As a result of such domestic debacles, prominent scientists such as Bromley and Thomas Appelquist, Yale Graduate School Dean, urge American science to cooperate, rather than compete, with other countries. As a first step, America could join CERN — the EC consortium which is building the Large Hadron Collider (LHC). According to Dean Appelquist, a physicist, the smaller-scale LHC "may do the trick" in solving the mystery of mass. Investing in the LHC will cost about \$500 million altogether: a paltry sum against the SSC's \$11 billion.¹⁷

Even though this seems like a decent solution to the layperson, it is unlikely that Congress will agree to a more international stamp on research. Rep. Frost, although sympathetic himself, terms such hopes politically "unrealistic," because Congress will not willingly pay for research on foreign soil. At a recent hearing, Rep. Barton criticized physicists for "making a 180-degree turnaround and hopping over to Europe."¹⁸ Ironically, former supporters may oppose international collaboration, for they originally pitted the SSC against Europe's

faces a quandary, for earmarking reduces funding for programs approved through peer review. If Congress refuses to fund the LHC, the Department of Energy can carve out funds from the existing budget, and it can close a marginal national lab like SLAC. Can Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary make such a politically unpopular decision? A "very pessimistic" Appelquist doubts it:

Don't assume the public is stupid. If you can't explain your research to a layman, that is incontrovertible evidence you don't understand either.

At the risk of sounding obvious, Bromley expresses a profound truth: science must respect the taxpayer. In order to convince the public to invest in the future of research, scientists must become more effective lobbyists. In fact, they may find a receptive audience. According to a recent NSF poll, 85% of Americans supported basic scientific research, even when the research does not offer immediate benefits.²⁰ Conversely, improved science education can make Americans

American corporations have allowed their "national treasures," R&D laboratories, to atrophy in seeking higher stockholder returns

more scientifically literate, as the 1958 National Defense Education Act ensured. A better informed public might well have approved the supercollider.

IO The basic issue which is created by these questions is whether or not the government should fund science in the first place. Liberals and conservatives alike find this support necessary. Both camps recognize that the free market will not undertake basic research on its own, for the market cannot predict "where, when, and to whom the benefits will flow."²¹ The profit motive would not have landed man on the moon.

Furthermore, as funds become scarce, the government, scientists, and the American people must work together to determine the American science agenda. Conservatives prefer basic research over politically popular research for the long-term dividends it produces. Bromley maintains that the level of fundamental research will determine America's future competitiveness. American corporations, he argues, have allowed their "national treasures," R&D laboratories, to atrophy in seeking higher stockholder returns. Government, therefore, must compensate for Wall Street's myopia.

Although many an economist would dispute Bromley's reasoning, no one can deny one basic fact: research has become difficult to afford. Certain industries, exploiting recently relaxed antitrust laws, have pooled their research efforts in order to exploit economies of scale which reduce costs. Venture capitalists now supply the expertise which corporations previously provided themselves.²² American industry, therefore, may not be underinvesting after all, and the government would do well to follow its example, by sharing research costs with other countries.

Rather than collaborate on less expensive, pure research projects like the LHC, the Clinton Administration wants to devote greater resources to "specific, goal-oriented" research — AIDS, breast cancer, the information superhighway. Basic researchers also chafe as Vice-President Gore centralizes the funding of research. They fear that the newly created National Science and Technology Council will only respond to "hot-button" issues.²³

On a visit, Disraeli once questioned Faraday, regarding the practical use of his power generators. The father of electromagnetism replied to the Prime Minister: "I know not, but I wager that one day your government will tax it."²⁴ Directed research must not displace the basic, "impractical" science which brought television to the world. Planning for the future is just as important as curing AIDS.

In a larger sense, the Superconducting Supercollider fell victim to a fundamental shift in national priorities. Celebrating the victory of the

Cold War, America yearns for a more domestic agenda: medicare, not mega-science. Since science research funds are more scarce, the country must sensibly balance its present and future needs — which requires true leadership. Above all else, Yankee know-how cannot betray the legacy of Einstein, Hubble, and Edison. Otherwise, a proud tradition of excellence might tragically end with a whimper.

Notes

¹ Author's interview with Yale Graduate School Dean Thomas Appelquist, 28 January & 6 February 1994. All subsequent attributions to Appelquist stem from these conversations; and *Beam Line*, Summer 1991: 1-7 *passim*.

² Author's interview with D.A. Bromley, 27 January 1994. All subsequent attributions to Bromley originate from this date.

³ Dr. Alvin Triplepiece now directs Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

⁴ From author's interview with Rep. Frost, 29 January 1994. All subsequent references to Frost originate from this conversation.

⁵ *New York Times*, 11 November 1988.

⁶ Author's interview with Craig Murphy, press secretary to Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX), on 27 January 1994; D.A. Bromley interview. DOD receives 59% of the science budget, 92% of which it devotes to developing weapons.

⁷ White House transcript, 10 March 1988.

⁸ *Dallas Morning News*, 22 January 1993.

⁹ Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), *Waxahachie Daily Light*, 27 May 1993.

¹⁰ Rep. Frost.

¹¹ *Dallas Morning News*, 9 June 1993.

¹² Author's interview with Craig Murphy. All subsequent attributions to Murphy refer to this conversation.

¹³ Associated Press, 25 February 1993.

¹⁴ Rep. Jim Slattery (D-KS), *Dallas Morning News*, 22 October 1993.

¹⁵ D.A. Bromley.

¹⁶ Rep. John Myers (R-IN), *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 22 October 1993.

¹⁷ *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2 February 1994.

¹⁸ *ibid*.

¹⁹ D.A. Bromley; T. Appelquist.

²⁰ D.A. Bromley.

²¹ *ibid*.

²² Author's conversation with Professor David Swensen, Yale Portfolio Manager, 3 February 1994.

²³ Dean Appelquist; *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 26 January 1994.

²⁴ SSC promotional literature, 1993.

Too often the government invests in programs that have big returns in the next elections when they ought to invest for the next generation

The author wishes to thank Dean Thomas Appelquist, Professor D. Alan Bromley, US Representative Martin Frost, Press Secretary Craig Murphy, Professor Merton Peck, and Professor David Swensen for their gracious assistance in making this article possible.

The Ignoble Lie

Kimberly Kagan

II

History teaches that a healthy and secure society requires a citizenry which is well-trained in and familiar with science and technology. In an era when such training and familiarity are both more than usually important and growing ever more difficult to acquire as a result of the fast pace of scientific discovery, one is tempted to sympathize with any program which seeks to encourage an interest in science. This temptation is the greater when the program seeks to attract to science groups which have traditionally evinced relatively less enthusiasm for such knowledge. In principle, then, one should applaud the efforts of the American Association for the Advancement of Science to encourage members of minority groups to seek higher degrees in science and to help place them in prominent research positions. Unfortunately, however praiseworthy its objectives might be, the AAAS runs a serious risk not only of compromising those objectives, but of unwittingly providing intellectual support for social theories and feelings which may perpetuate racial inequalities and hostilities, whatever the ostensible goals of the theories might be.

The objectives of the AAAS are indeed praiseworthy. In 1991, the AAAS held a conference to attract "minority scholars into research on values and ethical issues in science and technology." Most of the conference focused on values and ethical issues important to minority communities which have, in the past, been ignored by most scientists. There can be no doubt that there are ethical issues relating to the implementation of the results of scientific research which are of particular concern to minority communities. In addition, funding priorities have not always taken into account research that will have particular meaning for minority groups, nor have medical researchers always included minority groups as control and experimental groups in testing the validity of their

research. Unfortunately, the conference's conclusions exceed this well-intentioned mandate, and assert that there is a "unique ethnic minority perspective on science."

The notion that science is not wholly independent of culture and cultural bias is not new and should not be the subject of controversy. The AAAS is quick to demonstrate in an excerpt from the work of Harvard scientist Stephen Jay Gould in the report of the workshop, *Viewing Science and Technology through a Multicultural Prism*, that:¹

Science...is a socially embedded activity...Much of its change through time does not record a closer approach to the absolute truth, but the alteration of cultural contexts that influence it so strongly. Facts are not pure and unsullied bits of information; culture also influences what we see and how we see it. Theories, moreover, are not inexorable inductions from facts. The most creative theories are often imaginative visions imposed upon facts; the source of imagination is also strongly cultural.

Mark S. Frankel, the author of the AAAS report, concludes, "All scientific inquiry requires a perspective, for research is not only investigation but interpretation as well. Such perspective conditions not only what the scientist perceives as important, but also his or her choice of methods and conclusions" (p.8). No one who is well acquainted with the history of science would deny the core of these assertions: the scientific process is influenced by culture. From the Copernican insistence that the sun circles the earth, to the Soviet belief that Lamarck was correct, cultural, political, and religious influence have all had a profound impact on the development of science. Taken alone, Dr. Gould's and Dr. Frankel's assertions seem like nothing more than common sense notions. What is disturbing, however, is the conclusion that is drawn therefrom by the advocates of a "multicultural perspective in science."

Those who wish to introduce multiculturalism to science assert that there is

We are confronted with the unwarranted leap from the need for greater diversity in the process of funding, publicizing, and implementing scientific research to the recognition of unique intellectual attributes of various ethnic groups

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Sunny Chu, a Freshman in Davenport, contributed to the writing and researching of this article.

In their programs to increase the representation of minority groups in science, champions of the minority perspective distinguish among people based solely on race, not culture

something "unique about ethnic minority perspectives" which, if identified, "would help to improve our understanding of how science and technology affect minorities, how they [minorities] perceive such impacts on their lives, and how they might be able to effect change in the practice and application of science" (p.21). Clearly it is important to attempt to understand how minorities perceive the impact of science and technology upon their lives, and to determine if there might not be ways to help include their concerns in the process which generates those impacts. It is an entirely unwarranted leap, however, to assert that "by listening more diligently to what non-traditional voices can tell them, scientists may discover new ways of thinking about, looking at, or solving old problems." It is one thing to posit that science and technology have different impacts on different groups; it is quite another to propose that different groups have different "ways of thinking about, looking at, or solving problems." At the core of this assertion is the unstated argument that ethnic groups differ not merely in the color of their skin, the dialect of their speech, or the location of their ancestors' graves, but also in more fundamental ways involving intellect and imagination. It is this unstated assertion which threatens to compromise the AAAS program.

Concrete proposals which aim "to move toward a multicultural science and technology" accompany this assertion.² Invoking the goal, some have called for a great push to increase the numbers of minorities in doctoral programs and in faculty research positions, to establish professional networks among minorities to discuss minority perspectives on science, and to encourage collaboration among minorities on scientific research. Also, this push calls for the inclusion of minorities in those bodies which oversee science policy, which assign priorities and award funding to scientific research, which oversee the publication of scientific research, and to render scientific education "culturally relevant."³ One participant in the AAAS workshop also "declared that 'the workshop should send a resounding message to the people who fund research about the critical need to fund studies which *question the legitimacy of Western science*'" (emphasis mine) (p.23). The AAAS report concludes, "there are also benefits for scholarship and policy regarding science and technology by making them more inclusive. Greater diversity can reveal insights unseen by entrenched perspectives or orthodox approaches."⁴

It is important again to note that only part of this agenda is objectionable, while the rest may well be reasonable. One may argue that minorities should have greater representation on the bodies which oversee funding of scientific projects, which assign priorities to those projects, and which oversee publication of research,

although both sides of that argument have some merit. However that may be, once again we are confronted with the unwarranted leap from the need for greater diversity and inclusiveness in the process of funding, publicizing, and implementing scientific research to the need to recognize the unique intellectual attributes of various ethnic groups.

Both aspects of the AAAS agenda, however, face the same serious problem. Although there is a drive to incorporate "the unique ethnic minority perspective" on science into mainstream scientific bodies and research, no one has examined the nature of this minority perspective to determine what, in truth, it might be. One participant in the AAAS conference criticized the workshop by saying, "By the end of our six days together I came to the conclusion that no one really is sure what minority perspectives are, and whether they are fundamentally different than [sic] the *status quo*" (p.20). The author of the report continues, "It is not known how many of her peers at the workshop would agree with her, but in looking back at the agenda it does seem that too little time was devoted to this more substantive issue. This is clearly a matter that would benefit from more study" (pp.20-21).

Despite this admission that the "unique ethnic minority perspective" on science has yet to be identified and defined, those who believe it does exist have pressed for sweeping changes, many already underway, even in the absence of such definitions.⁵ This approach is problematical, because the advocates of diversity programs in the sciences, taking on faith the assertion that there is such a perspective, find themselves relying upon tenuous logic and weak arguments from example to support and inform their efforts. For instance, the report argues that the influences of such cultural perspectives "are clearly at work in ongoing ecological research in Alaska, where Alaska Natives have challenged scientists to pay more attention to Native ways of observing nature—what they call 'traditional knowledge.'"⁶ (Rubin 1992, p. A4) This anecdote is elaborated elsewhere:

Because native people live in the region all year, they have a historical and first-hand view of the Bering Sea's ecosystem that researchers cannot easily capture through statistics and computer models. Scientists have responded by acknowledging that native people look at nature with a different world view and see things that outside scientists just do not see, such as various cycles and peculiarities associated with the marine mammals whose numbers are declining in the Bering Sea.⁷

The logical fallacies of arguing for the existence of a "unique ethnic minority perspective" on science based on this anecdote are obvious. The anecdote shows that Alaskan natives, by virtue of daily and yearly living in the Bering region, observe more subtle changes in the ecosystem than scientists

who make transient appearances there. No evidence is presented to show that the natives observe these changes because they have a unique perspective based on their culture or their ethnicity, but common sense would suggest that the subtlety of their observations stems from their vastly greater opportunity to observe—and observation, of course, is one of the foundations of empirical and experimental science. Generalization is always dangerous as a guide to reality, and arguments such as these cannot reasonably be used to support the assertion of the AAAS.

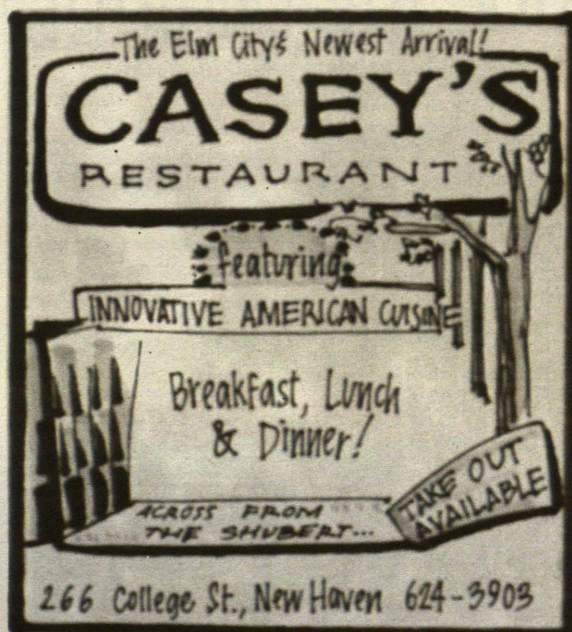
But what if there really is a “unique ethnic minority perspective” on science? Proponents of multicultural science seem never to have asked the question. They have not thought through the consequence of discovering such a perspective and demonstrating what it is. The consequences would probably be devastating for those of us who cherish the goal of a race-blind society and who would hope that people would be judged on their individual merits, and not on the color of their skins or on the groups to which they belong.

The proponents of the “unique perspective” theory believe that there is something dramatically different about people belonging to different ethnic groups within the United States. This important difference, they would argue, enables ethnic minorities to interpret problems and data differently from the way Americans of European descent do.

Another question inadequately explored at the AAAS conference is: What is the difference that allows ethnic minorities to conceptualize problems and their solutions in a way significantly unlike fellow American scientists? Is it their culture? Do they wish to assert that ethnic minorities are not a part of American culture? There seems little basis for this assertion in fact: America’s culture is that of a democratic, pluralist society, in which ethnic minorities play an integral social and political role. Advocates of the “minority perspective” appear not to have examined the logical, and quite pernicious, consequences of the assertion that ethnic minorities are not part of general American culture. It is one thing to argue that minority groups preserve unique cultural heritages which form an important part of their identities as distinct groups which are also part of American society at large. It is quite another, and quite a dangerous thing, to assert that minority groups are, in fact, separated by their cultural heritages from general American society. Yet the advocates of diversity programs in science must make precisely this claim to demonstrate why the inclusion of the “unique minority perspective” will effect such a dramatic transformation of science.

Yet the champions of the “minority perspective” either do not really believe that culture is the difference between the problem-solving capabilities of minorities and those of Americans of

European descent, or are baffled by the problem of figuring out who has what culture—as well they might be. In their programs to increase the representation of minority groups in science, they distinguish among people based solely on race, not culture. For example, the AAAS, in choosing its participants for the workshop which formulated its position supporting the “unique ethnic minority perspective” on science, gave preference to applicants from the following groups: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Chicano/Puerto Rican/Latino, and American Indian/Native American (p.12). In addition, applicants needed an advanced degree in one of many fields, including science, law, and the humanities. On what factors were the applicants judged? The selection committee evaluated the applicants’ credentials and references, the ways in which they proposed to use the workshop in their professional work, their research interests, and their home institutions. The committee then evaluated the group to ensure a “representation of diverse disciplines” and “representation of all the minority groups specifically identified for participation in the workshop.” The AAAS never considered the cultural background of an applicant; the judges decided which applicants could attend only according to superficial categories based on race. In fact, in reporting the demographics of the workshop participants, the AAAS reported their ethnic background mainly according to the racial



divisions listed above. To be fair, it would have been quite impossible for the AAAS to have based their conclusions on culture, for culture, unlike race in its legal sense, is not a readily definable concept.

Nor did the AAAS report the religion of their participants, or how many generations a participant's family had lived in the United States, two possible ways of trying to define culture. Certainly the organizers of the conference would not assert that fourth generation blacks, for example, necessarily are in touch with their African roots, or that they definitely cannot have integrated themselves into American culture because they are black. It follows, therefore, that the AAAS chose their participants only on the basis of the superficial determinants of race.

Advocates of multicultural science surely do not intend to persecute minorities and perpetuate racism and ethnic stereotyping. There is little room for doubt that they are trying to help the very groups which they categorize on the basis of skin color. It is to be feared, however, that those who seek to advance the causes of minorities in mainstream science by asserting that those minorities have a unique perspective, have not considered the profound implication of this assertion and its consequences.

Proponents of multicultural perspectives on science believe that minorities conceptualize scientific problems differently, and that this influences their "choice of methods and conclu-

sions" (p.8). In other words, they believe that minorities have different modes of thinking from Americans of European descent, and, as I have shown, they believe, however innocently, that these different intellectual capacities arise from race. Enunciation of this belief may inadvertently lead people to adopt either or both of two pernicious lines of thought, one with historical precedent and the other a more current concern.

First, the belief that racial differences produce different intellectual abilities and processes underlies not only the push for multicultural science but also a major justification for institutionalized racism such as the sort which existed in South Africa. For example, one Boer government official wrote to another in 1810:

It is Your Honours opinion that the reasons I gave for this nation [i.e., the native Hottentots] to serve the [Boer] inhabitants in whose care they were born and brought up, were not sufficient to explain why they should work for the inhabitants until their twenty-fifth year as compensation for the care and trouble taken in their upbringing...

These objections are very acceptable and would be very applicable, if one were dealing only with Christians. But in my opinion they cannot be applied without adaptation to heathens, and especially not to Hottentots, who are generally accounted to be of the most stupid sort, and who therefore never think, nor can think, as Christians do.⁸

The champions of multicultural science have no more evidence to support their claim that minorities think differently from other Americans than Landdrost van der Riet had to support his belief that the Hottentots were hopeless. However this may be, the danger remains that extremists on the right will misuse this doctrine, which is lent more credence among the general public because it is propounded by scientific "experts." The belief that minorities think differently can be used to justify bigotry against and persecution of any marginalized group, and one should carefully think through the consequences of making that assertion and claiming to have supported it scientifically.

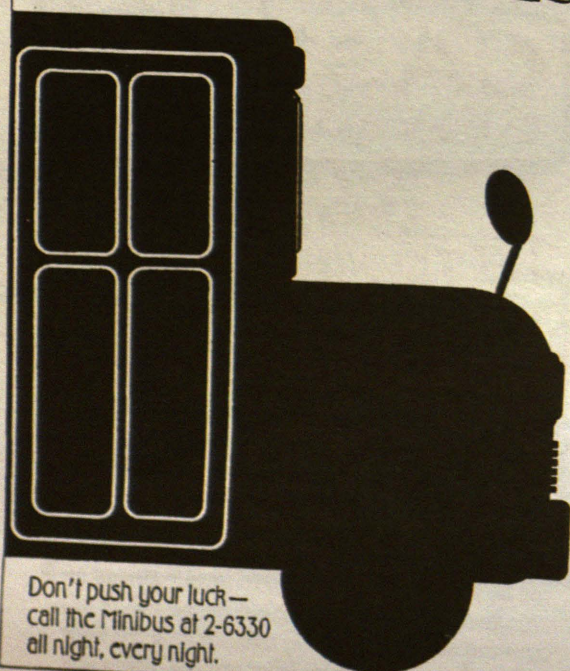
Yet bigotry is not the only peril: danger approaches from the left as well. Some adamant multiculturalists and Afrocentrists have already begun to present grossly unscientific curricula, such as the Portland *Baseline Essays*, to present to students as "true science." Those scientists who support the multicultural perspective argument often criticize such course material as unscientific,⁹ which was by no means developed as a result of their assertion. The belief that minorities have a unique way of thought, however, paves the way for the development of Afrocentric curricula and lends credence to their underlying principles.

The Portland, Oregon Public Schools

14

The belief that minorities have a unique way of thought paves the way for the development of Afrocentric curricula and lends credence to their underlying principles

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commissioned and adopted *Baseline Essays* which "give information about the history, culture, and contributions of a specific geocultural group in the areas of art, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and music."¹⁰ The *Baseline Essay* on the African American contributions to science describes how the Egyptians knew much astronomy, physics, and genetics long before Europeans made their "discoveries about the same subjects." In doing so, the authors "hope to show black children that their ancestors have a long, and often ignored, history of accomplishment in areas like science."¹¹

The essay must be criticized on several grounds, not least of which is its ahistoricity. Egyptians were in no way the ancestors of the vast majority of blacks currently living in America. Neither were the Muslims, whose prodigious scientific achievements are also trumpeted as belonging to the ancestors of American blacks. There can be no question that both the Egyptians and the Arabs did attain very high levels of technological and scientific expertise, well in advance of "European" civilization. It is a fact that the Egyptians' prowess had come and gone long before there was any European civilization to speak of. It is also a fact that both the Egyptians and the Arabs were among the most notable conquerors, oppressors, and enslavers of some of the peoples who were, in reality, the ancestors of most American blacks. The attempt to expropriate Egyptian and Arab culture for the enrichment of American blacks is both fallacious and insulting to true African Americans. There is very little less culturally sensitive than to assert that any people who once lived on the same continent as one's ancestors did are part of the same racial and cultural group as one is.

Be that as it may, the curriculum does not describe the actual contributions of the Egyptians to science, but instead goes out of its way to invent the scientific discoveries they made on the basis of unidentified artwork and religious inscriptions and texts. One science scholar, Irving M. Klotz, has already demonstrated that these so-called discoveries do not actually correspond to the laws of physics or genetics which they are supposed to anticipate.¹²

Yet the worst feature of this curriculum is not in its failure to identify genuine African contributions to science, but in the danger it creates when it portrays the Egyptians as arriving at those contributions through unscientific and illogical methods. The essay glorifies the irrational means through which the "Africans" have always attained their knowledge. For example, the essay reads, "Africans search for understanding the nature of things led them to discover beyond the material cause-and-effect relationships, the hidden yet more pervasive transmaterial ones—information and even ones own thoughts and emotions."¹³ It states, "The ancient Egyptians were known the world over as the masters of...psi [psychoenergetics]: precogni-

tion, psychokinesis, remote viewing and other underdeveloped human capabilities."¹⁴ It continues, "Psychoenergetics (also known in the scientific community as parapsychology and psychotronics) is the multidisciplinary study of the interface and interaction of human consciousness with energy and matter...Psi [psychoenergetics], as a true scientific discipline, is being seriously investigated at prestigious universities all over the world (e.g., Princeton and Duke)."¹⁵ Indeed, the essay declares, "For the ancient Egyptians as well as contemporary Africans worldwide, there is no distinction and thus no separation between science and religion."¹⁶ In short, the essay juxtaposes the spiritual "African" approach to obtaining knowledge to the experimental, and therefore material, methodologies of Western science.

At the heart of the essay, therefore, lies the assumption that Africans think differently from Europeans. In fact, the essay's author, Hunter Adams, "has lectured on the unusual properties of melanin, a dark skin pigment that a small group of controversial black scholars argue makes blacks a superior race."¹⁷ These scholars argue:

Melanin can convert light to knowledge or store memory.

In black humans, melanin is located in the central nervous system, autonomic nervous system, peripheral nervous system, neuroendocrine glands and visceral organs. Because melanin is located in these structures and is involved in memory processing, individuals with high melanin content have special characteristics.

Melanin granules can respond, analyze reactions without interacting with the brain.

Melanin can absorb the wave energy of magnetism.

Melanin when it absorbs energy can convert states, that is, can act as a semiconductor.¹⁸ In short, these scholars argue that blacks think differently from whites because of the color of their skin quite literally. One leading opponent of the *Baseline Essay on Science* "charges that those beliefs are clearly the theoretical framework behind some of the [curriculum's] exaggerated accomplishments attributed to Africans."¹⁹ Where were these ostensible properties of melanin discussed? In a symposium at the 1992 Annual Meeting of the AAAS, the leading proponent of the "unique ethnic minority perspective" on science. The dangers for racial equality inherent in the belief that minorities have a unique perspective on science are real.

This does not mean that the proponents of diversity in science are anything other than vehemently opposed to such nonsensical "science" and "history" as appear in the *Baseline Essay on Science*. Unfortunately, the AAAS, through its assertion of the existence of a "unique ethnic

15

In the long term it is fully as damaging to assert that blacks are innately superior to whites as to assert the contrary

Although there is a drive to incorporate "the unique ethnic minority perspective" on science into mainstream scientific bodies and research, no one has examined the nature of this "unique perspective" to determine what it might be

minority perspective" on science has opened a Pandora's box — and even at AAAS conferences, it is not always possible to know precisely what will emerge. It is much more dangerous, then, to bruit this assertion about in society at large, with the pedigree of the support of prestigious scientists and scientific organizations.

If there is any hope for America it lies in patching over differences between groups, rather than in exaggerating them, and it is critical for this purpose to avoid generating ideologies of difference. In the long term it is fully as damaging to assert that blacks are innately superior to whites as to assert the contrary. A civil society can only remain civil when important groups do not go about asserting that they are superior one to another, but recognize instead that they all form necessary component parts of the larger society. It may not be genetically true that all men are created equal, but the well-being of society requires that we act as though they were.

Notes

¹ Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*. New York: Norton, 1981. As cited in Mark S. Frankel, *Viewing Science and Technology through a Multicultural Prism*. Report of the Project, "Attracting Minority Scholars into Research on Values and Ethical Issues in Science and Technology." May 1993. Scientific Freedom, Responsibility and Law Program of the Directorate for Science and Policy, American Association for the Advancement of Science. p.8. This AAAS report will be cited without title by page number in for the remainder of the article.

² Mark S. Frankel, "Multicultural Science," *Chronicle of Higher Education*. 10 November 1993. pp.B1-2.

³ *Ibid.* Also AAAS report, pp.25-26.

⁴ AAAS report, p.26. Citing Collins, Patricia Hill. "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought," *Social Problems* 33 (December 1986), pp. S14-S32.

⁵ Elizabeth Culotta, "Finding—and Keeping—Minority Professors," *Science*. 12 November 1993. pp. 1091-1096.

⁶ Julia Rubin, "Alaska Natives Seek Voice in Environment," *The Washington Post*. 5 January 1992, p.A4. As cited in the AAAS report.

⁷ Frankel, *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

⁸ Letter from Landdrost R. J. van der Riet of Stellenbosch to Fiscal J. A. Truter, 1 April 1810. Translated from the original in the Cape Archives, St. 1/29. As printed in Du Toit, Andre, and Giliomee, Hermann, *Afrikaner Political Thought: Analysis and Documents*, Volume I: 1780-1850. Cape Town and Johannesburg: David Philip, 1982. Section 2.6. Emphasis mine.

⁹ John Travis, "Schools Stumble on an Afrocentric Science Essay," *Science*. 12 November 1993, pp.1121-1122.

¹⁰ *African American Baseline Essays*. Portland, Oregon: Portland Public Schools, 1990, accompanying insert on "The Concept," p.1, and accompanying booklet on "Using the Essays," p.1. As cited in Klotz, Irving M., "Multicultural Perspectives in Science Education: One

Prescription for Failure," *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 1993.

¹¹ Travis, *op. cit.*, p.1121.

¹² For this point I refer you to the article by Irving M. Klotz, cited above

¹³ Portland Baseline Essay on Science, *op. cit.*, p.s-13

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p.s-41.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p.s-14.

¹⁷ Travis, *op. cit.*, p. 1122.

¹⁸ "Whose Science and Math Is It Anyway? Multicultural Perspectives," a symposium at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Chicago, February 1992. The statements quoted are a selection from a public talk at the symposium. A video recording of the presentations can be obtained from Mobiletape co., 25061 W. Ave. Stanford, Valencia, CA 91355. As cited in Klotz, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ Travis, *op. cit.*

Advocates of multicultural science surely do not intend to persecute minorities and perpetuate racism and ethnic stereotyping

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Escape From New York

Chris Wang

17

Across the country, rebellion is in the air. Faced with the mounting problems of crime, poverty, and dilapidated schools, and frustrated by government's inability to deal with them, residents of several cities from Staten Island to California are seriously contemplating the option of secession, once considered a radical response to these problems. At first glance, secession appears to be the 1990s' middle-class equivalent of "white flight," whereby white residents of the city decide to leave and forsake its problems. Yet, as opposed to a slow trickle of white residents leaving the city for the suburbs, secession will drive a large racially and economically homogeneous bloc away from the urban center.

The underlying impetus of secession stems from the same "out of sight, out of mind" mentality that characterized the earlier migrations of city residents to the suburbs, in which people wanted the cultural benefits of the city but did not want its tough problems. These "tough problems," which often equate with "crime" and "drugs," raise the issue of race in many minds. Secession movements, explains Ester Fuchs, director of the urban affairs program at Barnard College, are produced by "some subtle notion that we'll leave other people who aren't like us."¹ The end result will be familiar to many Yale students, predicts David Goldfarb, president of Staten Islanders for a Unified New York: "The inner city becomes abandoned by the white middle class, a situation not unlike New Haven."²

The current desire to break away, however, is fundamentally more about green than it is about black and white. Long beset by problems of decreased representation and services and increased taxes, secession proponents view their movement not in racial terms but as a natural extension of the tax revolt against inefficient government that asks for more than it returns — they are "middle-class people trying to get control over their lives," in Fuchs' words. Many believe that secession can bring government closer to the people and allow them to

experience the tangible results of their tax dollars. This sentiment strikes a chord in many cities such as Staten Island. On 2 November 1993 the borough voted in a referendum to secede from New York City. Staten Island, as one of the first secession movements to emerge and as a microcosm of nationwide urban frustration, is an important test case. Its fate will have a large influence on the future of self-determination proponents everywhere, including those here in New Haven. Although secessionist movements in Staten Island and elsewhere are a well-meaning and understandable backlash against the failings of big government, these efforts are ultimately a misguided attempt at a "quick fix" solution that will create even greater problems, both economically and sociologically, than it will resolve.

As the smallest borough in New York City, Staten Island has constantly felt dumped upon, both literally and figuratively, since its incorporation with Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens into the entity New York City in 1898. Initially, Staten Island felt that New York City neglected its interests by failing to guarantee environmental protection and the same basic services accorded to other boroughs. As a result, Staten Island threatened to secede in 1916, 1938, 1947, and 1966. Fresh Kills landfill is a focal point for the community's discontent — it is a garbage dump on Staten Island's West Shore Expressway that was built in 1947, and is currently the home of all of New York City's refuse. It is also the world's largest garbage dump.

The current secession movement arose in 1983, when a federal court ruled that the New York Board of Estimate violated the constitutional principle of "one person, one vote." In March 1989 the United States Supreme Court upheld this decision. The Board, which granted Staten Island a representation equal to that of the four larger boroughs in deciding New York City issues, was subsequently dissolved, and a new city charter was adopted. This charter diminished the power of borough presidents and established a 51-person council with only three Staten Island representatives. Consequently, Staten Island no longer

The residents of Staten Island and New Haven must realize that the drive for self-determination is no more than an instinctive reaction to the political situation of the moment

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enjoyed an equal voice regarding decisions on important city issues. Staten Island's simple frustration at "step-child" status boiled over into outward political resentment. The secession movement was formally declared.

The resulting bill regarding Staten Island secession proposed by State Senator John Marchi in 1983, contingent on the dissolution of the Board of Estimate, passed overwhelmingly in the New York State Assembly and was signed into law by New York Governor Mario Cuomo. The bill established a November 1990 referendum for Staten Island residents to research the feasibility of secession. Staten Islanders passed the referendum with an 82% vote, which contained provisions for a 13-member State Charter Commission to study the secession issue, and to draft a proposed charter for the city of Staten Island. This commission spent two years extensively studying the issue through meetings and research from outside consultants; the commission's research determined that the 400,000-person borough could exist as an independent city and proposed a charter for an independent Staten Island that was referred to in the 1993 referendum.

Sixty-five percent of Staten Island voters approved the November 1993 referendum. In order for the issue to return to the New York State Legislature in Albany, the commission must draft legislation which will be the basis of an independent city of Staten Island within three months. The State Legislature will then determine whether to allow Staten Island to separate from New York City. With a newly-elected Republican mayor who has made it clear that he will not fight tooth and nail to keep Staten Island a part of New York City and a sympathetic, liberal Democrat-dominated State Legislature aware that Staten Island gave the mayor his margin of victory in the last election, Staten Island's dream of independence and autonomy is not far from becoming a reality.

Many pro-secession residents point to the principle of self-governance as the driving force behind secession. Staten Island residents are voicing a legitimate complaint. The bloated government bureaucracy of New York City, like many large cities, is unresponsive to its constituents and unable to provide many services which residents desire. This inefficiency is particularly telling in Staten Island, which demographically more closely resembles the communities of Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester counties than it does the boroughs of Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens, and Brooklyn. Sixty-nine percent of the island's population is of Italian, Irish, or German descent and only 5% of the residents are African-American.³ It is also wealthier than the rest of the city: the per capita income of Staten Island is 14% greater than that of Queens; 42% greater than that of Brooklyn; and 66% greater than the Bronx.⁴

Only 10% of Staten Island's population is below the poverty level, as opposed to a statewide average of 17% and a New York City average of 25%.⁵ Staten Islanders are also more likely to own a house and a car than other city residents. As a result of these discrepancies, New York City public policy with regard to taxation and allocation of public funds often meets the needs of the majority at the costs of the needs of Staten Island residents. As Singletary argues, "Just to keep New York City intact while serving people poorly is something that must be addressed."⁶

Proponents of secession argue that it will grant Staten Island a larger say in its own affairs. The proposed government of Staten Island will replace the inadequate representation on the New York City Council on with a mayor-council structure, which has a strong chief executive, a fifteen-member council, and a comptroller to serve as chief fiscal officer for the city. Unfortunately for Staten Island, politics is only one side of the secession story. Although Staten Island will finally achieve political control of its affairs, the secession will place the new municipality on economically shaky ground which will likely override any potential political gains. At first glance secession makes economic common sense for both New York City and Staten Island. New York City is currently facing a \$2 billion deficit and several studies, some commissioned by the Mayor's Office, calculated that the city loses \$160 - \$199 million a year between the cost of services provided to Staten Island and the revenue grossed in the borough. As a result, Singletary asks, "Why don't you (NYC) let us go? We do not cost the city a great deal."⁷

The Charter Commission also argues for secession on economic grounds. An independent "Status Quo study" of Staten Island revenues and expenditures also figured New York City loss at \$170 million. The study estimated that only \$670 million funds the actual cost of delivering services to the island. The other 40% of the \$1.1 billion service delivery budget includes services provided centrally by New York City, the cost of administrative overhead, and the cost of debt service. Staten Island possesses a secure revenue base of \$955 million. The Commission found that Staten Island can annually spend \$670 million of this base, equal to the amount currently allotted to it for direct services by the city, and still possess \$285 million to pay for other indirect and administrative costs. With added efficiency and government streamlining, the Commission concludes in this report, an independent Staten Island can provide services at a comparable level to the current and achieve a 70-30 split of the costs of services to administration similar to ratios New York currently achieves in providing services to the other boroughs.

The Commission further bolsters its findings with references to other independently

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researched reports. The "Twenty-Five City Study" studies 25 cities of comparable size to Staten Island and concluded that the average cost of services, \$833 million, is well below the almost \$1 billion worth of revenues the city of Staten Island can generate. The Commission's conclusion that the transition of Staten Island from a borough to an independent city would be economically feasible reflects, however, the combination of wishful thinking and conjecture. Although New York City might feel relatively little economic pain as a result of a separation from its smallest borough, the same cannot be said for Staten Island. The new economic arrangement that secession will probably bring about will not be mutually beneficial for several reasons.

First of all, the \$670 million expenditure figure the Commission projects is highly misleading. Staten Islanders utilize many services in New York City that are not provided directly on the Island, such as 911, police training, and jails. The cost of these other "direct services" is around \$313 million, some of which are mandated and cannot be cut. Only \$151.5 million of the \$1.1 billion allotted to Staten Island for services is applied to centrally provided "administrative costs." Even with substantial government streamlining, the cost of delivering services at current levels would be above \$1 billion. New York City has also set aside \$332 million over the next four years for projects such as roads and sewers for Staten Island. Even with one of the healthiest economies in the New York City region, how an independent Staten Island might pay for all these centrally-provided services has not yet been adequately researched.

The cost of services for an independent Staten Island also cannot be directly extrapolated from a comparison with 25 cities of similar size. This economic "projection" ignores the reality of the situation. Staten Island has significantly higher costs of living and salaries than any other city on the "Twenty-Five City Study", and thus, significantly higher expenditures. New York State also decided that local governments must be the principal providers of services, adding yet more to the costs of services for an independent Staten Island.

Costs also cannot be easily translated from the current New York City budget. There are significant start-up costs, such as the cost of establishing a government infrastructure, and the cost of financing capital programs for the new city. The commission has ignored. Staten Island would also be assigned a percentage of the current New York City debt; this debt will range between \$70 million and \$149 million depending on how it is calculated. All of these "hidden" costs will not be financed across the eight million member tax base of New York City, but across the much smaller 400,000-member tax base of Staten Island. This will result in either an enormous rise in taxes, or a cut in services, or both. As Goldfarb comments, "One large capital expendi-

ture could cost Staten Islanders a tremendous amount of taxes. Many services we don't provide now, New York City provides. We don't have a jail, 911 service, a police academy, a forensic lab — all these would have to be recreated."⁸

Even pro-secession forces have conceded the likelihood of higher taxes to make up the deficit and the importance of services not provided directly to the Island. The Charter Commission has assumed "that an independent Staten Island eventually will choose to define its own tax structure."⁹ The assumption that Staten Island will be granted the ability to levy an income tax is highly unlikely, however, since Yonkers is the only city other than New York with an income tax. A 15 April 1993 report prepared for Borough President Molinari suggests that the independent City of Staten Island might resemble even more the downstate urban counties of Nassau, Westchester, and Suffolk insofar as they all suffer the burden of state-mandated services, while raising revenues through high property taxes. In contrast with the Staten Island property tax of \$720 per capita, the average per capita property taxes in Nassau and Westchester County are \$1,862 and \$1,869, respectively; an independent Staten Island's are likely to follow suit.¹⁰

Under this scenario, this report concludes Staten Island might begin its existence with a deficit as high as \$356 million. Property taxes would have to increase by 132% to close the deficit

19

The current desire to break away is fundamentally more about green than it is about black and white



without cutting existing services,¹¹ which is highly ironic considering that one of the main rationales for secession is the desire to escape the new property tax that is supposed to result from the current restructuring of the New York City real property tax system. Potential property tax increases reduce the popularity of the option of secession amongst many Staten Island residents. Of the 70% of respondents who initially favored secession, 23% changed their mind when increased taxation was included as part of the deal.¹² Even more telling, if property taxes were to increase, only 22% of respondents would favor secession. Only 4% were willing to see their taxes doubled or tripled.¹³

Just as Staten Island is not economically strong enough to initiate a break with New York City, it is not strong enough to sustain one. Staten Island demonstrated one of the highest rates of job growth of any of the five boroughs in the 1980s, and current estimates show that between 1990 and 2010 the Island's population will grow by 20% and employment will grow by 23%,¹⁴ but the Island currently possesses a negligible industrial base. Only 2.9% of the available jobs are in the manufacturing sector; such a small number of industries will hardly relieve the tax burden on businesses and residents. In response, pro-secession forces point to Staten Island's rapid growth rate in the 1980s and large areas of undeveloped land as indicators of potential to develop a strong economic base. Speaking for many in this camp, Singletary envisions an independent Staten Island as the "economic engine" to "help the Northeast region come out of the doldrums of the '90s."¹⁵

Such a scenario is, however, far in the future. In the meantime, an independent Staten Island would remain economically dependent on New York City. Even the Charter Commission admitted that it behooves Staten Island not to recreate centrally-provided services but to "rent" them from New York City. It is unclear whether Staten Island can receive jurisdiction over the facilities it currently possesses, or whether usage of a myriad of services on both sides, from Staten Island's Fresh Kills landfill to New York City's water supply, police academy, and jails can be continued. Goldfarb doubts the efficacy of such a process. "Who are they trying to fool?" he asks in a press release dated 14 October 1993. "Does the commission really believe we can pick and choose services from a New York City smorgasbord after we secede!"¹⁶

Jobs, as well as services, currently tie Staten Island firmly to New York City in a relationship highly beneficial to the former. Over 60% of the Island's work force is employed off the Island and the City has also worked to bring jobs to Staten Island. The "Study of Staten Island's Economy" admitted this connection: "Job losses in

Manhattan, Brooklyn and New Jersey have probably hit Staten Islanders harder than the relatively modest losses that have occurred on the Island itself."¹⁷ After secession, this situation will worsen because Staten Island will compete with New York City. For example, the New York City government has made it clear that it would enforce residency requirements on many governmental jobs after secession. As a result, those government workers that continue to work in New York City and reside on Staten Island would have to pay both the New York City resident income tax and the Staten Island property and other taxes.

These underlying economic problems are not specific to the Staten Island situation, but apply almost uniformly to secession movements everywhere. Nonetheless, the situation in Staten Island has created a domino effect throughout the country, reaching from the nearby borough of Queens all the way to California. Even the Elm City, symbol of inner city neglect, has not been immune to secession fever. Several thousand residents of the 13th, 17th and 18th wards of New Haven — the communities of Morris Cove, the Annex, and Fair Haven Heights on the East Shore — have called for these communities to secede from New Haven and become independent or to become a part of East Haven.

Much like the Staten Island situation, but on a smaller scale, the residents participating in pro-secession forces in New Haven believe that their association with the city is an artificial historical construct which they should not continue to maintain. The East Shore is a narrow strip of land approximately 12 square miles in size, and is linked to New Haven only by bridges; the East Shore was a part of East Haven until 1883. New Haven agreed to pay off East Haven's Civil War and bridge-building debts of \$160,000, on the condition that New Haven gain control of the East Shore and the New Haven harbor.

As a result of the East Shore's relative affluence and small size, residents perceive that they are being hurt both politically and economically by continued association with the city of New Haven. As Alderwoman Anne Piscottano (R-18) pointed out, "East Shore is 27% of the tax base and we only have three aldermen."¹⁸ In particular, East Shore residents have become increasingly dissatisfied with increasing property taxes and decreasing city services. New Haven is enacting a five-year phase-in plan of property assessments that will raise the current average property tax of \$3,500 in the East Shore to \$8,000; the New Haven Housing Authority, meanwhile, bought houses in East Shore neighborhoods for poor families and thereby removed the properties from the tax rolls. Alderman Michael Argento (R-17) explains, "There is a feeling that the city of New Haven wants money from the people and in return we don't get the services other parts of the city gets," such as street sweeping and police

*Secession
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view
their movement
not in racial terms
but as a natural
extension of the
tax revolt against
inefficient
government that
asks for more than
it returns*

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protection.¹⁹

The tax problem oppresses the many retired persons on fixed incomes in East Shore. "The people from the east side of the city cannot continue to survive (with the new taxes)," argues Argento.²⁰ This pent-up resentment toward New Haven led East Shore resident Anthony Cangiano to form the East Shore Secession Organization, which he describes as a "people's movement."²¹ From its inception a year ago, the organization has grown to include approximately 5,300 members in the three wards, which together contain a population of 24,000, 8,000 of them voters. According to Argento, the organization has lent "credibility to the argument that we cannot afford to raise taxes. New Haven needs to get a handle on how it does things such as spending and raising money."²²

The secession movement in New Haven remains a few steps behind that of Staten Island. Cangiano said that after receiving a positive response from East Shore residents, he plans to enact a bill in the State Legislature which will allow a referendum vote for the residents of the East Shore. If the referendum passes, the next step will be to officially propose a secession bill in the State Legislature. Secessionists realize that the General Assembly fears approving the East Shore's secession lest it open the floodgates to a host of other disgruntled communities. As a result, these groups are planning for a battle which will last, at the minimum, for two to three years.

In many other respects, issues facing the New Haven secessionists resemble those facing Staten Islanders. For example, the East Shore has not negotiated the allocation of services with New Haven. The New Haven airport, sewage treatment plant, and several parks are located in the East Shore region, and many other important city services are located in other parts of New Haven. It is unclear whether the East Shore could receive control over the services currently within its jurisdiction. If secession succeeds, one matter that is clear: New Haven will have to absorb the devastating loss of over one-fourth of its tax base.

The fact remains that the secession of East Shore communities will have a devastating social impact on the city of New Haven, no matter the intent of its proponents. Goldfarb predicts that: "New York stands to lose the diversity of having middle-income whites being part of the political mix in the city. By being primarily a black, poor urban core, it will lead to the detriment of the region."²³ The secession movements do not address the underlying problems of the city or its residents but choose to avoid them altogether. The haves and the have-nots cannot construct a political wall between themselves and the problems resulting from bad schools, rising crime, declining services, and racial tensions.

21

The Commission's conclusion that the transition of Staten Island from a borough to an independent city would be economically feasible reflects the combination of wishful thinking and conjecture

Although the secession movements have helped to raise the consciousness of unresponsive government and give a voice to many that might otherwise be ignored, the act of secession itself opens a Pandora's box that will produce severe consequences for everyone concerned. Rather than resort to expedient solutions, urban residents should come to terms with the fundamental problem of local and state governments' inability to respond to their needs. On the basic level, city dwellers urgently need more thorough delivery of government services and a fairer tax system to relieve their tax burden. Fuchs proposes a two-level local government with a metro government that would levy taxes more equitably, and smaller units of governance that would set spending priorities.²⁴

The mayors of New York City and New Haven are currently acting to deal with the underlying causes of secession sentiments. New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani pledged during his campaign to enhance service in all the boroughs by enabling the boroughs request themselves what they need. New Haven Mayor John DeStefano met with members of the East Shore Secession Organization and has proposed several measures to relieve the tax burden on East Shore residents. Mayor DeStefano is studying the feasibility of a regional approach to paying for municipal services and is also planning a civil lawsuit attacking Connecticut's local property tax system as unfair to cities.²⁵ In light of these proposed changes, the residents of Staten Island and New Haven must realize that the drive for self-determination is no more than an instinctive reaction to the political situation of the moment.

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Notes

- ¹ Peter Overby, "We're Outta Here", *Common Cause*, Vol. 18, n4, Winter 1992, p. 24.
- ² Author's interview with David Goldfarb, December 1993.
- ³ Catherine S. Mancgold, "Staten Island Secession More Than Fringe Threat," *The New York Times*, 9 August 1993, Sec. B, p6.
- ⁴ Molinari report, p. 8.
- ⁵ *ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁶ Author's interview with Daniel Singletary, December 1993.
- ⁷ Author's interview with Daniel Singletary, December 1993.
- ⁸ Author's interview with David Goldfarb, December 1993.
- ⁹ "Questions and Answers," p. 4.
- ¹⁰ Staten Islanders for A Unified New York: Report to Our Members, p. 3.
- ¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 2.
- ¹² Muzzio, p. 2.
- ¹³ *ibid.*, p. 3.
- ¹⁴ "Questions and Answers", p. 4.
- ¹⁵ Author's interview with Daniel Singletary, Decem-

ber 1993.

¹⁶ S.I.U.N.Y. Responds to Charter Commission Reports. (press release), p. 2.

¹⁷ Staten Islanders for a Unified New York: Response to the Staten Island Charter Commission's Report to the Governor and Legislature, 18 February 1993, p. 7.

¹⁸ Author's interview with Anne Piscottano, December 1993.

¹⁹ Author's interview with Michael Argento, December 1993.

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Author's interview with Anthony Cangiano, December 1993.

²² Author's interview with Michael Argento, December 1993.

²³ Author's interview with David Goldfarb, December 1993.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 26.

²⁵ Caroline Bass, "Root and Branch," *The Connecticut Law Tribune*, p. 8.

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